individuals, to find that the latter were preferable, whether as regarded celerity, quantity produced, or economy of manufacture; but the moment the continental system was followed, and every thing rendered subservient to government, the general energy would be cramped, and the public works of this country would dwindle into comparative insignificance. Civil engineers were bound to give every assistance in their power to the legislature, in order that public works should be established on the best principles; and the profession should make their services indispensable by their superior knowledge, and the liberality with which they offered them. The government and the public would necessarily apply to them, and they would then receive the due reward of their exertions.

The meeting was adjourned until Tuesday evening, February 2nd, when the following paper was announced to be read: "An Account of the method employed in laying the permanent way of the Philadelphia and Reading Railway, U.S.," by W. E. Newton.

THE SCHOOL OF DESIGN AND THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

Sir,—Suffer me through the medium of your widely-circulated journal, to offer a few remarks respecting the School of Design, in which I am a student. I am led to do this from the following circumstances:—The school has been accused of inefficiency, disputes have arisen among the masters, the students have been called upon to deliver their ideas, and state what they imagine to be the want complained of. Now being one of those appealed to it has occurred to me, that by bringing the matter before the public, the end sought by the masters will be obtained; and at the same time, the additional advantage will be procured of provoking discussion upon the suggestions offered, of drawing the attention of artists and competent persons who might be willing to give their advice and assistance, and by these means enable the committee of the council now sitting to receive new views, and have fresh light thrown upon a matter about which so little unanimity has hitherto prevailed.*

In offering the following remarks to your notice, I would be understood to give them merely as suggestions. Where so many, and of such high talent have failed, surely it would be presumptuous in me to endeavour to point out a path by which success would be obtained; but, at the same time, the greatest results are often produced from the poorest and least expected sources, and if these remarks but attract the attention, and direct the inquiries of some of our leading artists, architects, and sculptors, to the establishment of a nervous system of education in artistic, decorative, and industrial design, one great object for which the nation is most anxious will be answered; and England, as it is superior in power to all other nations, may likewise stand pre-eminent in art.

It has always seemed to me, as a student in the Government School of Design, that the standard of education was taken too low, and that though the hand was guided, and good studies were placed before the student, that the mind was left uneducated. The practice in all cases was taught, and taught well, but the *principles* that guide the practice were unexplained, no course or system of study by books, in connection with his drawing or painting, was pointed out to him, no lectures illustrative of the history or principles of his study were delivered to him, and he was left to flounder on from a Roman cast to an arabesque of Raffaelle, or from a Pompeian pilaster to a fragment of the figure. Without system and a well-directed course of study, the highest efforts are ineffectual, and the energies, otherwise well directed, are by this means wearied and disgusted. What is the course of study needed, or what the routine of instruction to be pursued, of course must proceed from a careful consideration of the subject by competent persons. I have merely stated my own feelings with regard to the want that I have felt, and I believe other students (though they do not like to express them), fully concur in the views that I have here set down.

Our country is eminently industrious over all other nations of the earth, and only point out the path to be followed and the sons of England are universally successful. In one respect alone, in that of art, are we inferior; our productions reach all quarters of the world, and provoke degrading comparisons between our own taste, and that of our continental neighbours, who are rapidly taking the lead of us in foreign markets, with their fancy manufactures on this account.

Let us endeavour to trace this to its cause. Our manufacturers, on being appealed to, say, we find it of no use to expend large sums of money in producing original and beautiful designs, for in nine cases out of ten an inferior copy from our continental neighbour, or something turned out by a practical genius in the factory, will command a larger sale than the most laboured and elegant invention. Whence does this proceed? surely from the want of art-education in the people; once accustom the public mind to appreciate the true proportion of form, originality and beauty of design, with correct harmony of colour,—and the unsightly abortions, now put forward by our best manufacturers, would speedily give way to an impulse that would place us at the summit of excellence in this as in every other respect.

With such a prospect as this before us, is it not incumbent on the Government to bestir themselves boldly, so as to give full and free scope to the wishes and wants of what must be the majority of the people? and in do this all niggardly ideas must be at once thrown aside: the importance of the object claims that it should be treated in a generous and magnificent manner, and that if we wish for a successful result we must give freely and encourage nobly.

I would suggest that a building should be erected purposely for the uses of the school; that each floor or room of the building should be appropriated to its own study; that in each room there should be a desk or tribune from which a lecture should be delivered to each class at least weekly, such lectures to be printed and delivered to each student in the school; that a *large* library for reference and study should be opened for the use of the school; and the student should not, as at present, be allowed to select his own book, but that a steady course of study should be pointed out, and those books given to him by the masters that would best assist him in the object for which he is working: on these books he should either be required to write a page of notes, or else he should be asked by the master a series of questions, to prove his having studied the subject.

I would also suggest that a complete register be kept of the school, with remarks against each name as to studiousness, advancement, &c., that half-yearly reports be made, and prizes given, these prizes on no account to be money.

In connection with this subject, I would also propose another and more comprehensive theme;—to make the school what it ought to be, and to diffuse as widely as possible the benefits to be derived from it, I would make the British Museum available, with its immense collection of art treasures, and I would also make it a means of educating the nation at large, or that portion of it which is, at present, debarred from studying the artistic and industrial productions of all ages contained within its walls. The class I allude to are those confined to business during the day,—surely, an immense, a well-educated, and, take them as a body, a most wealthy and influential class in our country,—to place before them the beauties and treasures contained in our Museum; to educate them in the study of the harmonious and beautiful; and by this means to lead them to exercise a purer taste in the selection of their greatest and minutest wants, will be one of the best ways of bringing about the "consummation so devoutly to be wished." This object is to be obtained by throwing open the British Museum to the public in the evening, not merely three nights in the week, but every night except Saturday, when in nine cases out of ten, the time that is wasted at theatres, and places of mere amusement, would be instructively and profitably employed.

In order that the Museum should be available for the School of Design, the new school should be contiguous to, and connected with, the Museum; and such books, casts, prints, vases, &c., as should be required for the use and study of the scholars, should either be removed, under proper restrictions, or the students should have free access to copy night and day in the Museum. Of the good conduct of the people admitted to the collection in the evening there could be no doubt; the crowd would be quite as orderly as in the day; due care being taken to refuse admission to improper and riotous characters. It might be objected, that the gas would injure many parts of the collection. To obviate this, the building should be lighted, as the present House of Commons, by gas from the outside of the skylights and windows, by which means all heat and impure air would be effectually excluded, and an even light procured, by which the students might work.

It might be urged, that such a system would incur great expense; to this I answer, that for such a boon and for such an object, the people would gladly and freely concede all that was asked.—I remain, Sir,

A Student in the School of Design, and Steady Subscriber to your Journal.

* A large mass of evidence has been taken by the committee, and will afford us matter for comment before long. Ed.

VENTILATION.

At a meeting of the Society of Arts, held on the 20th instant, a paper by Mr. Mather was read, "On the Ventilation of Schools, Churches, Public Rooms, &c." The author, after a lengthened introduction, proceeded to state, that the application with which he had been honoured from the committee of the Union Schools at South Shields for suggestions for ventilating their schools, had afforded him an opportunity of doing so. The first room is a school for boys, and is on the ground-floor; its length is 60 feet, breadth, 30 feet, and height, 13 feet; and contains 23,400 cubic feet. The second room, for girls, is on the upper story, and is 45 feet long, 30 feet broad, and 13 feet high; and contains 17,550 cubic feet. In the first room there are 180 boys, each breathing not less than 1,200 times an hour, and requiring more than 142,000 cubic inches of atmospheric air per day of twenty-four hours, which, for 180 boys, will be 25,560,000, or for the five hours they are confined in the school-room, 5,325,000 cubic inches of atmospheric air, a 7th and 3 8ths of the entire air of the room, pouring into it in that time from their lungs about 391,500 cubic inches of carbonic acid gas,—taking it 5 per cent. of the atmosphere inhaled,—mingling with it, also, nearly 3,206,750 cubic inches of free azote, or nitrogen, which, with the carbonic acid gas, constitutes a large portion of the school atmosphere. I entered these school-rooms, observes the author, towards the conclusion of school hours, and found the air vitiated to a serious extent,—emanations from the lungs and skin being very perceptible and sickly.

In order to prevent the injurious effects resulting from such an atmosphere, it is necessary that the whole air of the room should be changed at least every half hour, so that all noxious gas may be removed. For this purpose, he proposed that an aperture not less than 12 inches by 24 inches should be made through the wall on the west side of the room (the most open and unobstructed), 6 feet from the floor, equidistant from the end walls. This would be sufficient to displace the entire contents of the room every half hour, passing in at the rate of 6 feet per second. This column of air he proposed should be carried directly across the room by means of a wooden tube 12 inches by 16 inches, like a beam, and a second tube, 10 inches by 10 inches from the same aperture, should rise perpendicularly against the west wall to the ceiling, cross it at right angles, and then descend the east wall till it meets the horizontal beam at its extremity. From the centre on the floor, a tube is to rise as a pillar supporting the horizontal beam. These tubes are each to have about 500 holes drilled in them for the purpose of spreading the air in all directions. The author then proceeded to suggest various plans for the ventilation of churches and dwelling-houses of all descriptions, and also of confined courts, lanes, and streets.

The Memento Victoriæ at Guernsey.—The wherewithal to commemorate the momentous incident of the visit of the Royal Consorts to Guernsey, is announced to have already exceeded the sum of £2,000.

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